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TAGS: [PREL](#) [IAEA](#) [KNNP](#) [IS](#) [EG](#) [IR](#)
SUBJECT: EGYPT COMMENTS ON IAEA CONFERENCE OUTCOME

REF: A. VIENNA 557

[1](#)B. CAIRO 2817

Classified By: Minister Counselor for Economic and Political
Affairs William R. Stewart for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) MFA Disarmament Office Director Aly Sirry told poloff on September 30 that the recent IAEA General Conference outcome on the Middle East Safeguards resolution and the Israeli Nuclear Threat (INT) agenda item signaled a lack of substantive commitment to establishing a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. He complained that the USG failed to take seriously Egypt's proposed amendments to the safeguards resolutions; the abstentions by New Agenda Coalition partners were particularly annoying; and the U.S. should not continue to expect Egypt to try to influence other Arab states on the INT issue. Sirry said that following the conference, the French "expressed regret" for the role they had played in Vienna. He said Egypt is now considering how best to advance its commitment to the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone in the region in light of the outcome in Vienna. End summary.

Middle East Safeguards resolution

[1](#)2. (C) In a meeting with poloff on September 30, MFA Disarmament Office Director Aly Sirry said that Egypt believes the IAEA conference outcome on the ME safeguards resolution indicated that the consensus package (2005 and prior) was void of substance and that support for the concept of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East is superficial. He further complained that the U.S. did not take seriously the amendments Egypt proposed in 2007 and that the EU's claim that it had not had time to consider the amendments was unreasonable because Egypt circulated the draft ten days before the meetings began. Egypt is tired, he said, of the U.S. and EU "deferring to Israel" and refusing to press Israel to engage more substantively on these issues. When poloff said Egypt should have considered working to gain consensus on the language proposed in 2006, Sirry explained that returning to the 2006 draft was "unacceptable"; Aboul Gheit had made it clear to all concerned that he wanted a response on Egypt's 2007 proposal. Poloff again stressed the benefits of reaching a consensus on the Middle East agenda items, but Sirry said the Vienna experience proved that there was no real consensus on the substance and no will to move forward.

13. (C) The ultimate vote on the safeguards resolution was not surprising, Sirry said. Egypt believes that a fair number of EU countries supported Egypt's resolution substantively, but they could not vote in favor of it. Abstentions by some of the New Agenda Coalition partners were, however, "very annoying," he said. Egypt also found the French effort to gather support for language on compliance very "unhelpful." Sirry said in a discussion after the conference, the French "expressed regret" for the role they played in Vienna (NFI).

Israeli Nuclear Threat

14. (C) Sirry said Egypt felt strongly this year that the Arab Group's INT item should be treated as separate from Egypt's safeguards resolution. While acknowledging its influence within the Arab Group, Sirry said conditioning support for Egypt's resolution on disposing of the INT item with a procedural statement was unsatisfactory -- "it's like blackmail to my Minister." We had no instruction to link the agenda items, he added, suggesting that Aboul Gheit had given the guidance. Sirry then offered that Egypt is currently thinking about how to advance its goal of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East in light of the IAEA outcome.

Comment

15. (C) Given Egypt's negative posture in Vienna, positioning them to play a more constructive role in the coming year will require extensive effort. The Embassy supports expert-level engagement by appropriate ISN representatives at the earliest opportunity.
JONES